

MARVEL #6

DAVID
SLINEY
KEITH

BEN REILLY:

THE SCARLET SOLDIER



Years ago, Miles Warren, one of Peter Parker's college professors, stole a sample of Peter's genetic material and used it to create a perfect clone of Spider-Man. With all of Peter's memories, the clone fled. Created, not born, and without an identity of his own, he gave himself a new name and made his own way in the world as...



BEN REILLY:

THE SCARLET SPIDER

Ben Reilly has been laying low in Las Vegas. Fortunately, he has found an unlikely ally in Cassandra Mercury, owner of the MERCURY RISING casino.

Mercury's young daughter, Abigail, has been afflicted with a rare medical condition. In exchange for a place to stay and the equipment necessary to conduct his research, Reilly has offered to search for a cure for the deadly disease.

Meanwhile, Kaine, another clone of Peter Parker, has been tailing Ben for weeks, and the two recently came to blows. After learning of Ben's efforts to cure Abigail, Kaine begrudgingly offered a truce: as long as Abigail remains alive and Ben is working to cure her, Kaine will let him live...

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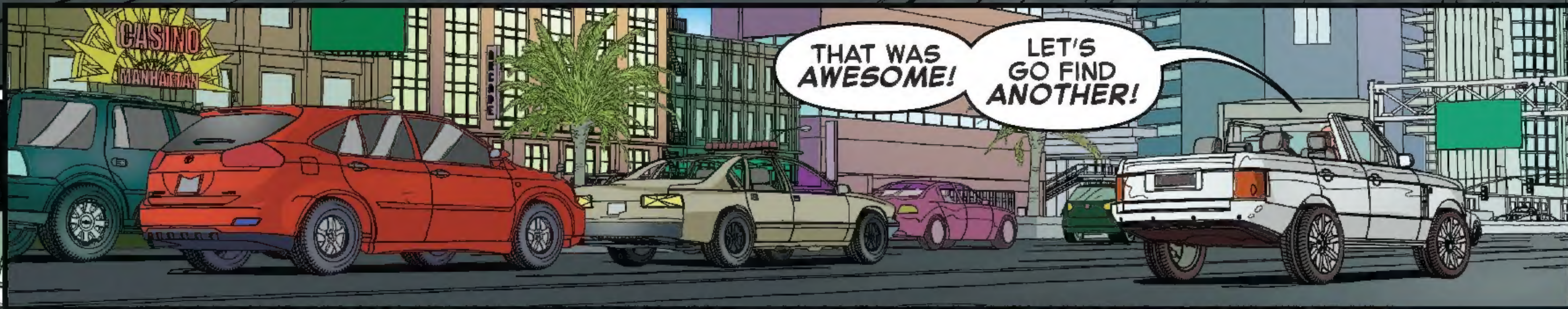
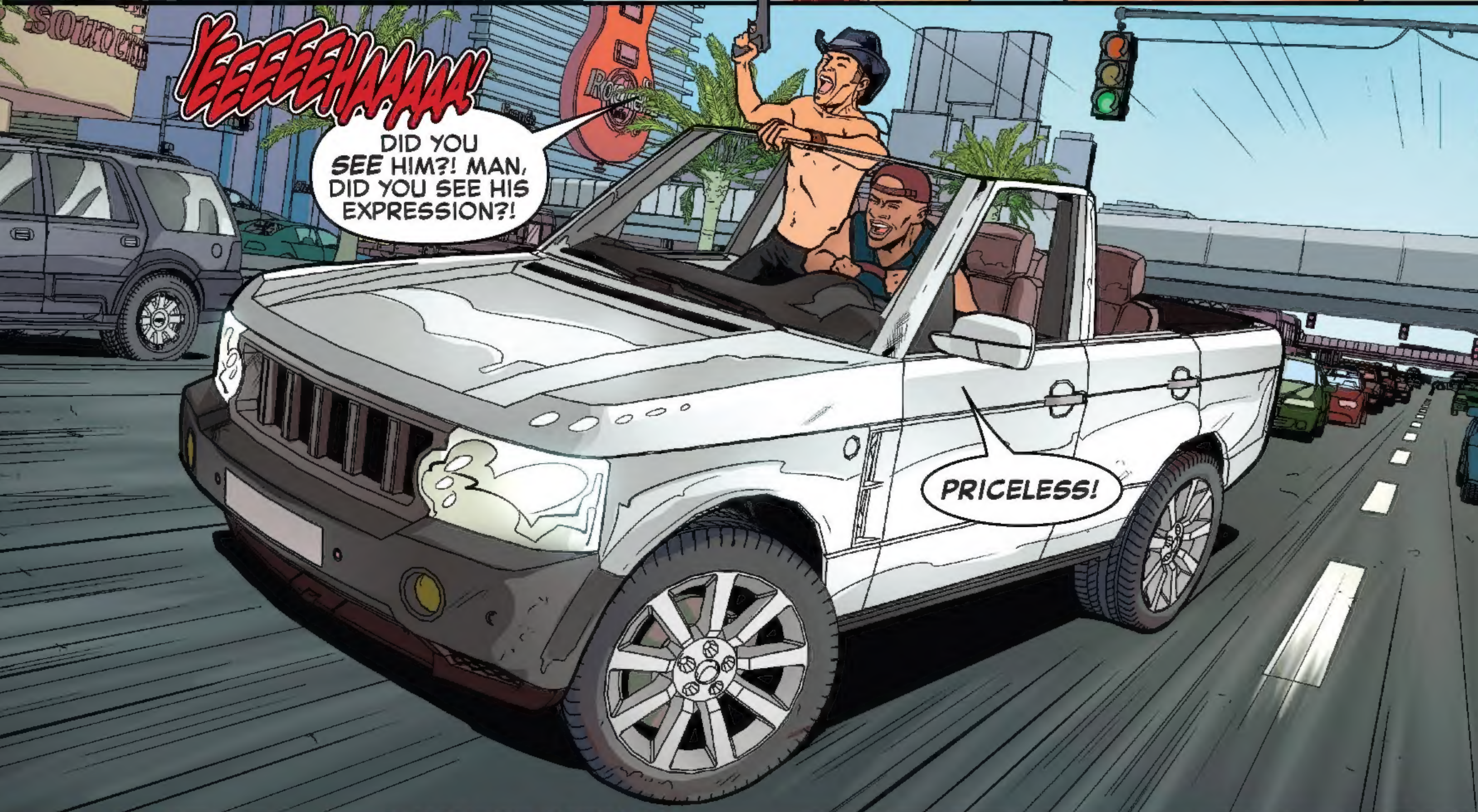
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I CAN'T EMPHASIZE ENOUGH--THIS IS NOT A CURE.

THIS IS A SERUM I'VE WHIPPED UP TO SLOW THE PROGRESS OF CROOKS' DISEASE.

ABIGAIL'S DOCTORS SAID THERE WASN'T ANYTHING LIKE THAT.

THERE WASN'T. NOW THERE IS.



SO YOU'RE INJECTING AN UNTESTED MEDICATION INTO A CHILD.

WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?

 WELL, IF I MISCALCULATED BY SO MUCH AS A FRACTION, SHE COULD BE DEAD WITHIN THE NEXT HALF HOUR. OTHER THAN THAT...



NOTHING. IT'S GOING TO BE FINE.



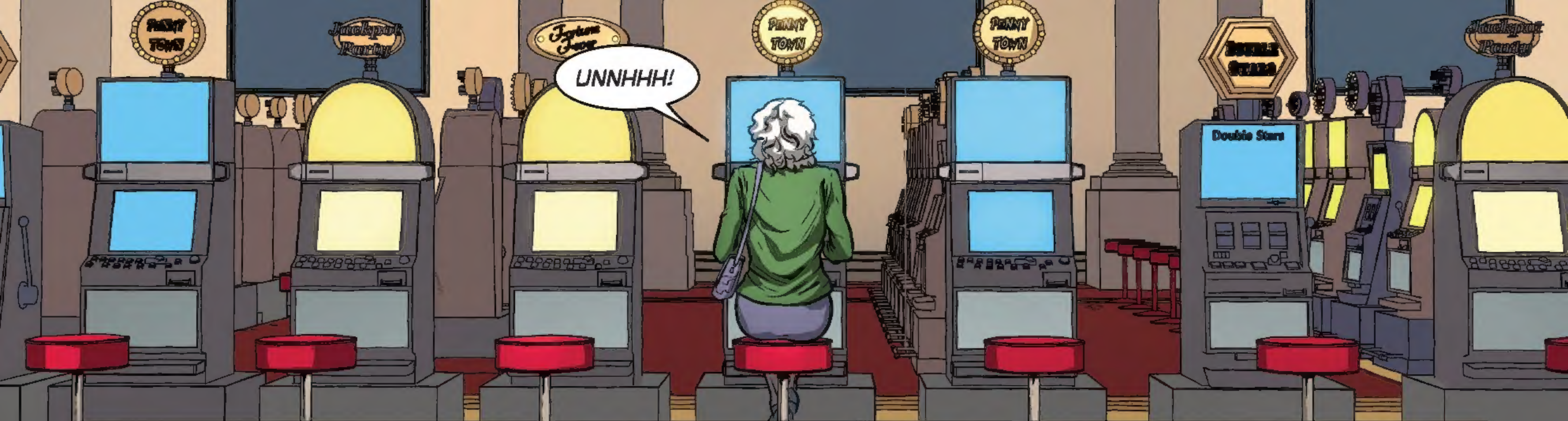
I TRUST YOU, PETER.

CAN I CALL YOU "PETER"?

IT'S NOT MY NAME, BUT...

SURE.







CAN I HELP YOU WITH SOMETHING?

I WAS JUST...

JUST WHAT?



I WAS JUST WONDERING IF YOU'RE A VET.

BECAUSE, NO OFFENSE, YOU LOOK LIKE YOU WERE ON THE WRONG SIDE OF SOME NAPALM.



YEAH. I'M A VET.

ME TOO. YOU GOT SOMEPLACE TO STAY?

NOT REALLY.



THERE'S A VETERAN'S SHELTER OVER ON WEST CHEYENNE. NOTHING FANCY, BUT IT'S A ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD AND THREE SQUARES A DAY.

MAYBE I'LL SEE YOU THERE.



YEAH. MAYBE.

WHAT AM I DOING? I DON'T HAVE ANYWHERE TO STAY...BARELY ENOUGH MONEY TO EAT.

I'VE BEEN AN IDIOT. PLAYING REILLY'S GAME.

I SHOULD'VE KILLED HIM. THAT'S ALL. I SHOULD'VE BLOWN HIS HEAD OFF IN THE ORGANIZED CRIME MUSEUM.

INSTEAD, I LET HIM GO SO HE CAN HAVE A SHOT AT CURING SOME DYING GIRL!

SO NOW I'M SUPPOSED TO...WHAT? SIT AROUND AND HOPE BEN SUDDENLY TURNS OVER A NEW LEAF AND WANTS TO HELP PEOPLE?

TO HELL WITH THAT.

I'LL HEAD OVER TO THE CASINO, CHECK IN ON THE GIRL, SEE HOW SHE'S *REALLY* DOING...

AND THEN REILLY AND I ARE GOING TO HAVE WORDS.

AND WITH ANY LUCK, THEY'LL BE HIS LAST.





DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER ME BACK THERE, DUCKING OUT ON CASSANDRA LIKE THAT. WEIRD HOW I SUDDENLY JUST FELT LIKE WALKING AROUND.

NOT SURE WHY. JUST WANTED TO GET UP AND OUT...

GUESS IT'S NOT SURPRISING. YOU COULD CUT THE TENSION IN THAT ROOM WITH A KNIFE...



HOLY...

I KNOW YOU!



DO YOU?

MARLO CHANDLER-JONES? RICK JONES' WIFE. I REMEMBER YOU FROM YOUR TALK SHOW, KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES.

I'M SURE YOU DO.

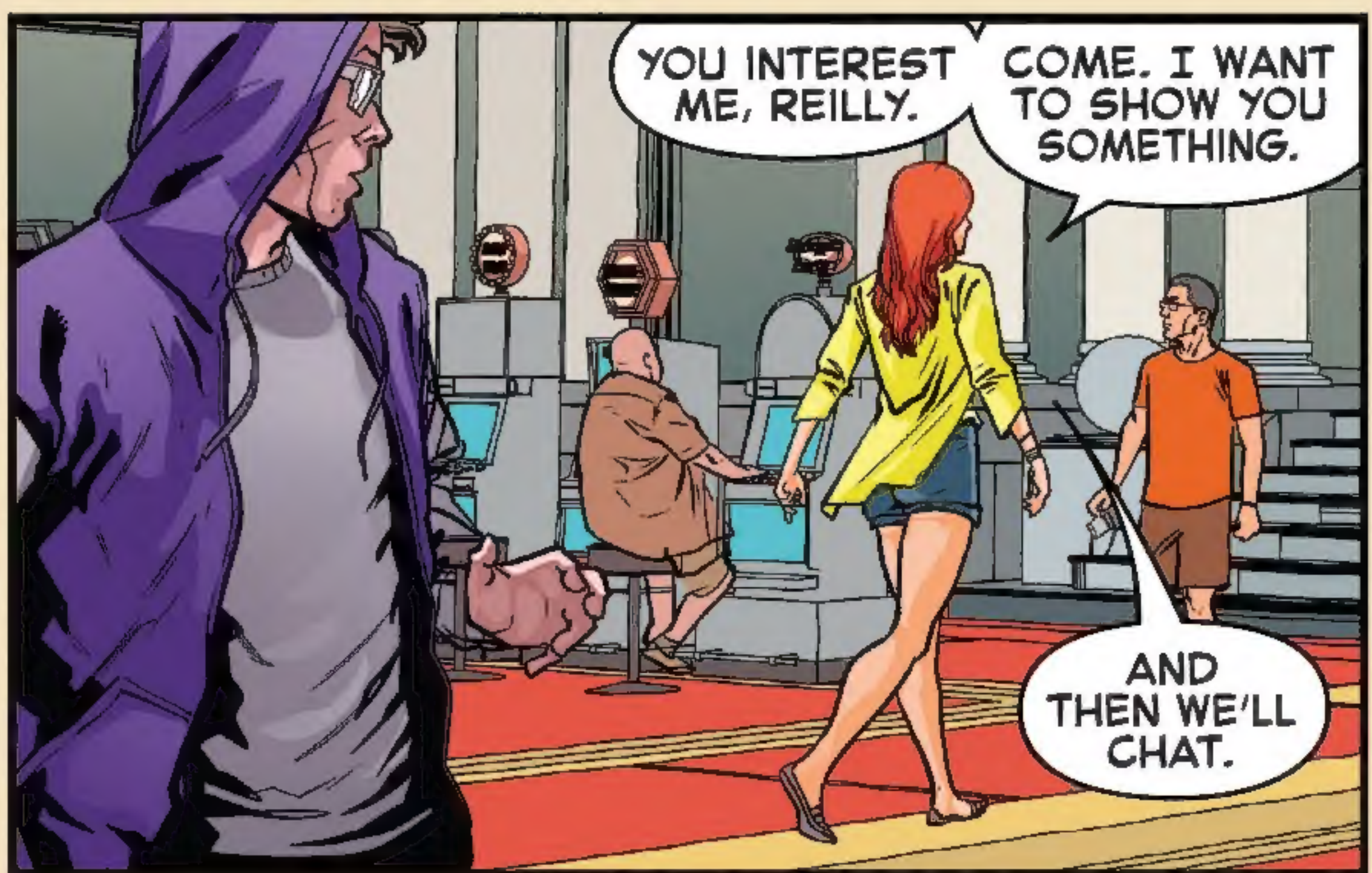


AND YOU'RE BEN REILLY. THE SCARLET SPIDER.



WHAT? I...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, LADY!



YOU INTEREST ME, REILLY.

COME. I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING.

AND THEN WE'LL CHAT.



GOTTA HUMOR HER AND PLAY ALONG. IF SHE KNOWS MY SECRET IDENTITY, THIS COULD BE TROUBLE.

EVERYONE KEEP MOVING! LET THE PARAMEDICS DO THEIR JOB, PLEASE!

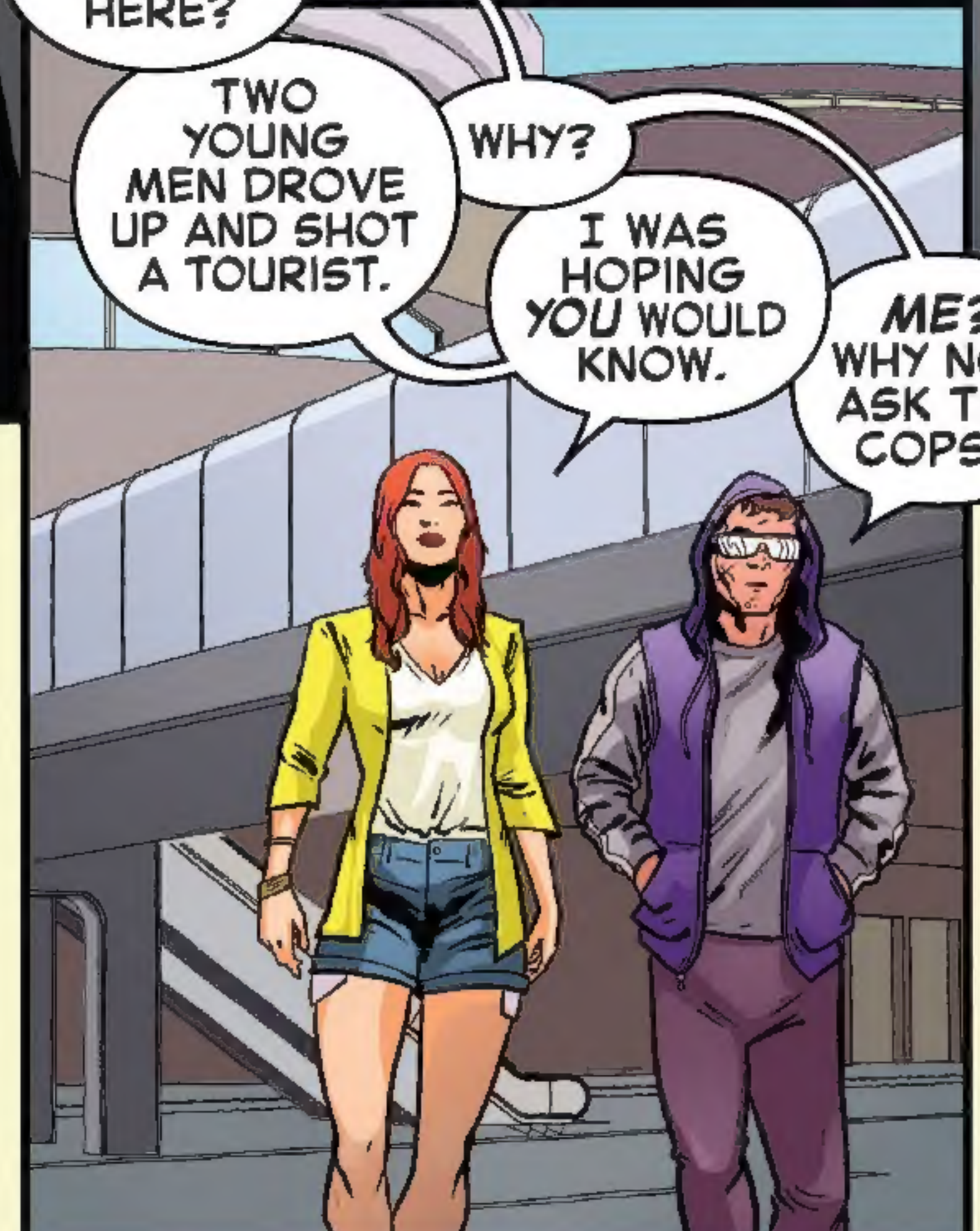
WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

TWO YOUNG MEN DROVE UP AND SHOT A TOURIST.

WHY?

I WAS HOPING YOU WOULD KNOW.

ME? WHY NOT ASK THE COPS?



ALL RIGHT.

NO, WAIT, I WAS KID--

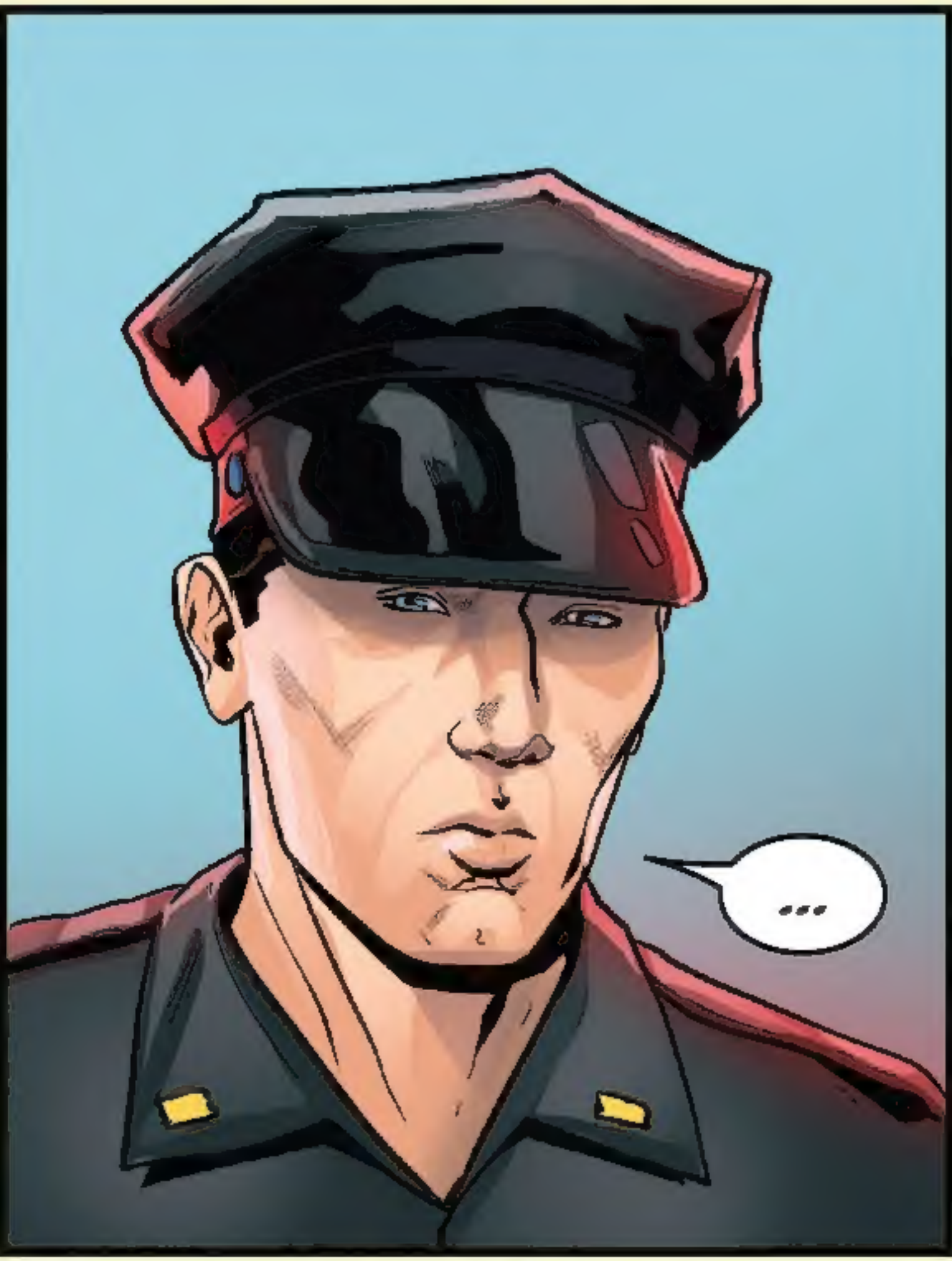


WHY DID THIS HAPPEN?

MA'AM, PLEASE STEP ONTO THE SIDEWALK. THIS IS A CRIME SCENE--



WHY-- --DID THIS HAPPEN?



...



WHAT THE HELL...? HE'S NOT SHOOING HER AWAY.



BEST GUESS, IT'S A PURELY RANDOM KILLING.

THESE SICKOS LIKE TO DRIVE AROUND, PICK PEOPLE ARBITRARILY AND JUST MURDER THEM.

THEY THINK IT'S FUN.



THANK YOU.



YOU HEARD THAT.

I DID. YOU HAVE A WAY WITH PEOPLE.

I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT, YES.

WHO WOULD THINK THAT INFLECTING DEATH IS "FUN"?

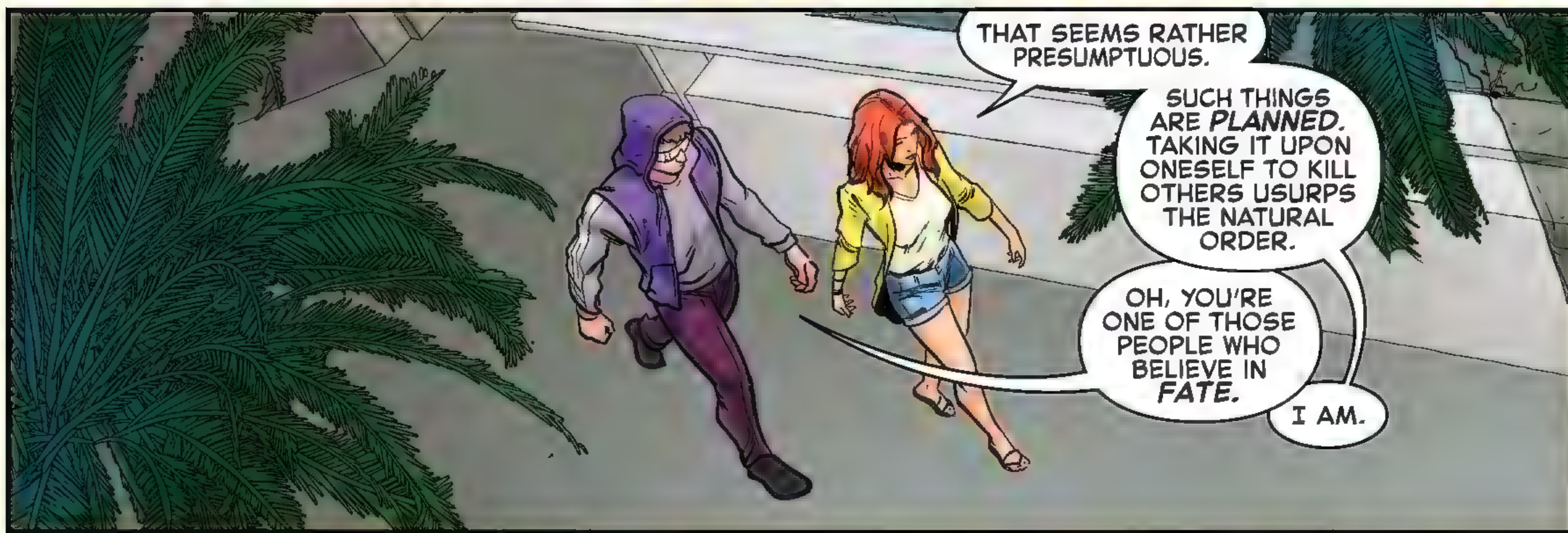


IT GIVES THEM A SENSE OF POWER, I GUESS.

THEY LIKE DECIDING WHO LIVES AND WHO DIES.

THAT ISN'T THEIR JOB.

THEY TAKE IT ANYWAY.

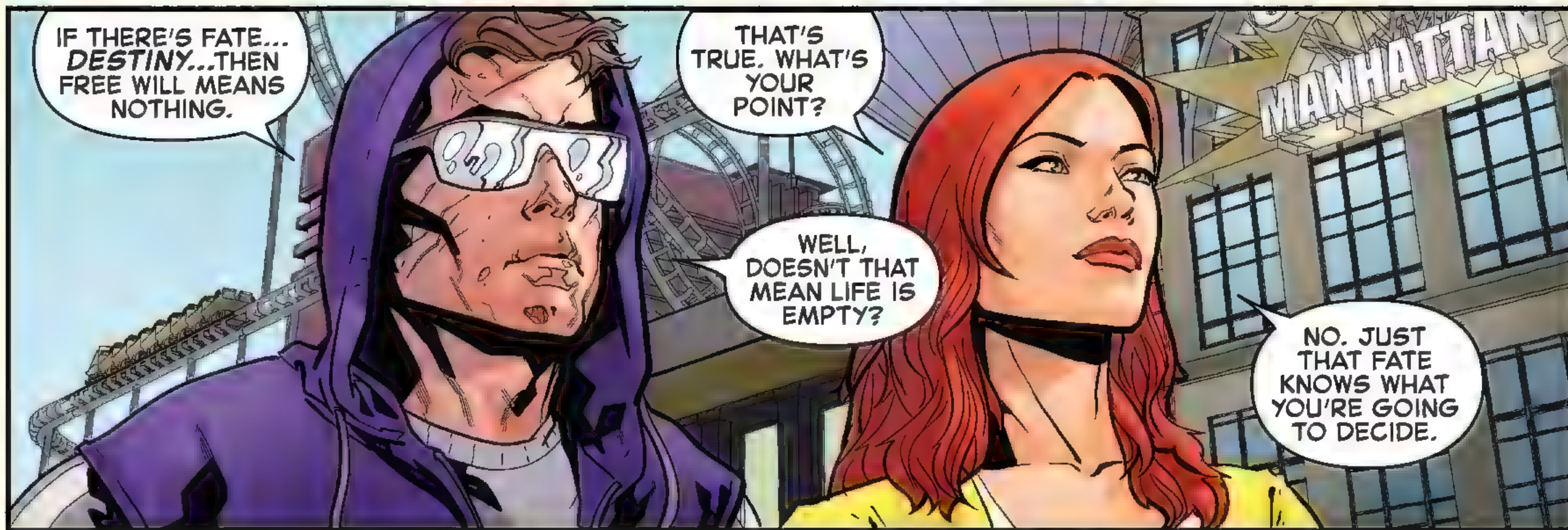


THAT SEEMS RATHER PRESUMPTUOUS.

SUCH THINGS ARE **PLANNED**. TAKING IT UPON ONESELF TO KILL OTHERS USURPS THE NATURAL ORDER.

OH, YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN **FATE**.

I AM.



IF THERE'S FATE... **DESTINY**... THEN FREE WILL MEANS NOTHING.

THAT'S TRUE. WHAT'S YOUR POINT?

WELL, DOESN'T THAT MEAN LIFE IS EMPTY?

NO. JUST THAT FATE KNOWS WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DECIDE.



DO YOU WANT TO FIND THEM?

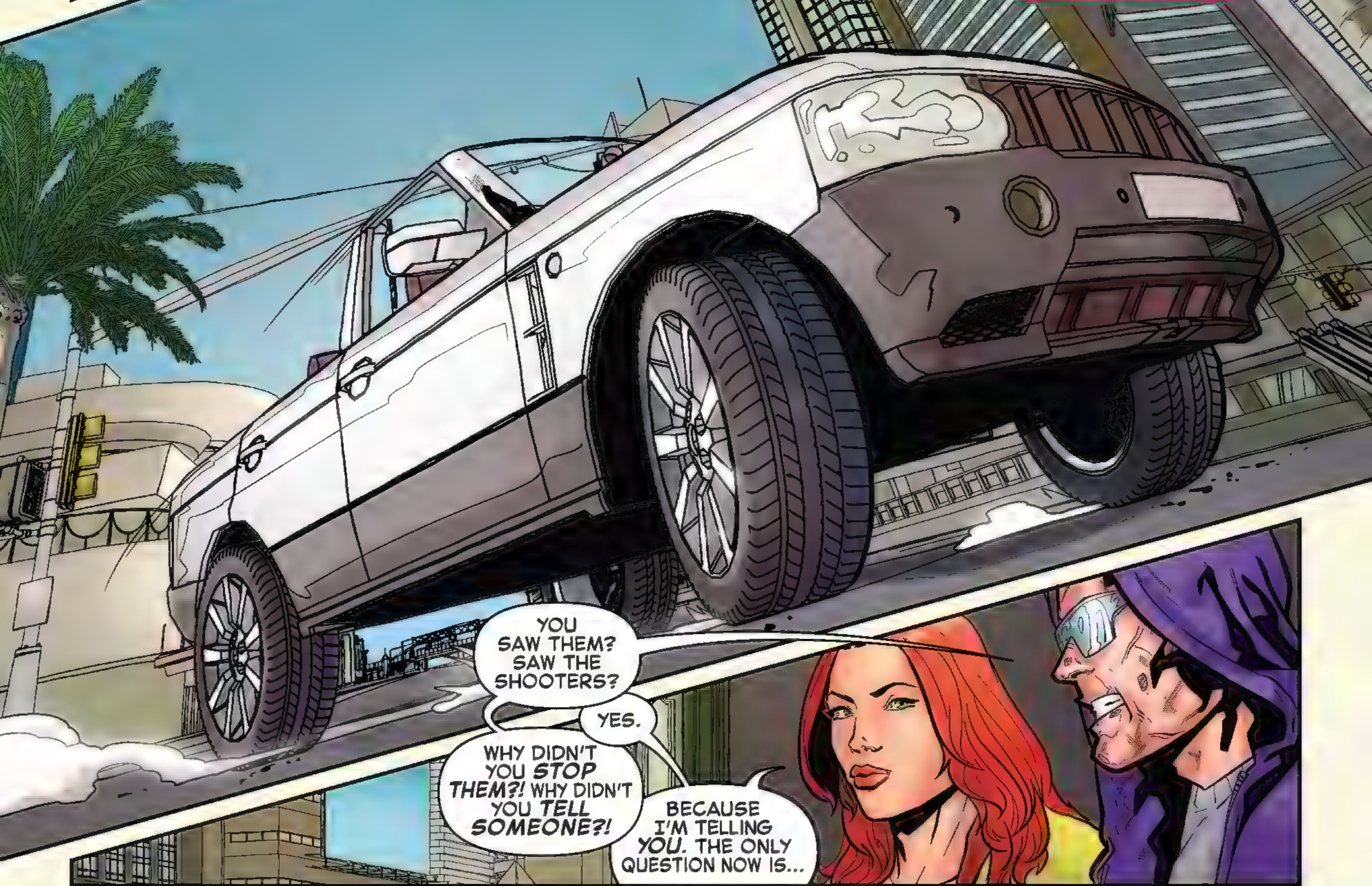
THEM? YOU MEAN THE SHOOTERS?

YES.

SURE, BUT--

"THEY ARE DRIVING A WHITE FORD BRONCO."

"LAS VEGAS LICENSE PLATE NUMBER AVX3 273T. THEY ARE LIKELY LOOKING FOR ANOTHER VICTIM."



YOU SAW THEM? SAW THE SHOOTERS?

YES.

WHY DIDN'T YOU STOP THEM?! WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL SOMEONE?!

BECAUSE I'M TELLING YOU. THE ONLY QUESTION NOW IS...



...WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT, SCARLET SPIDER?

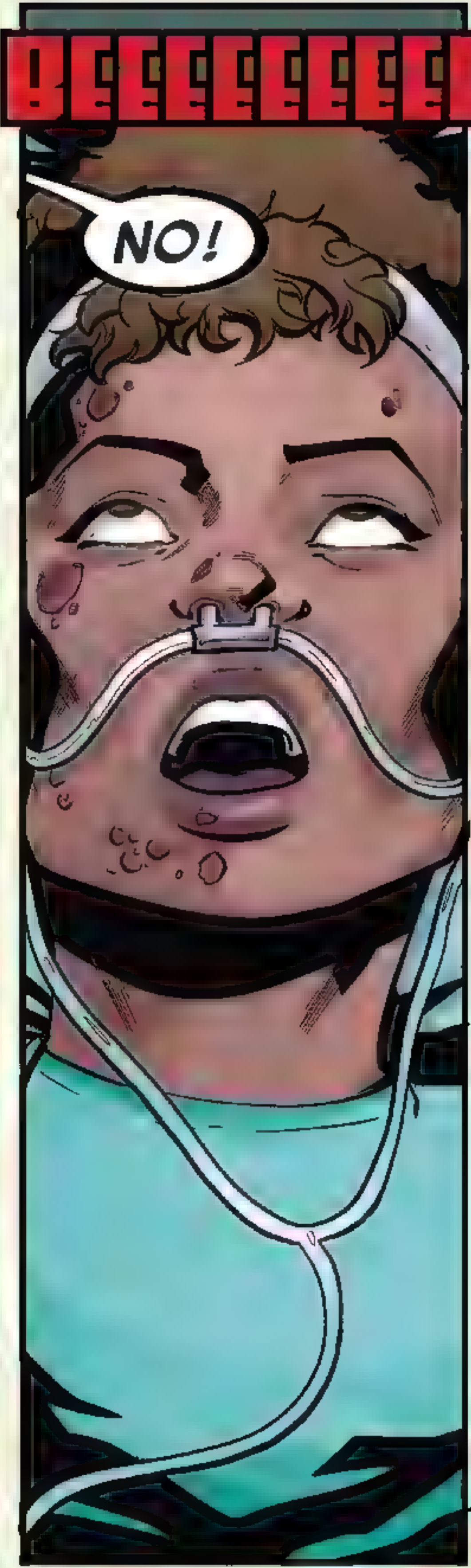


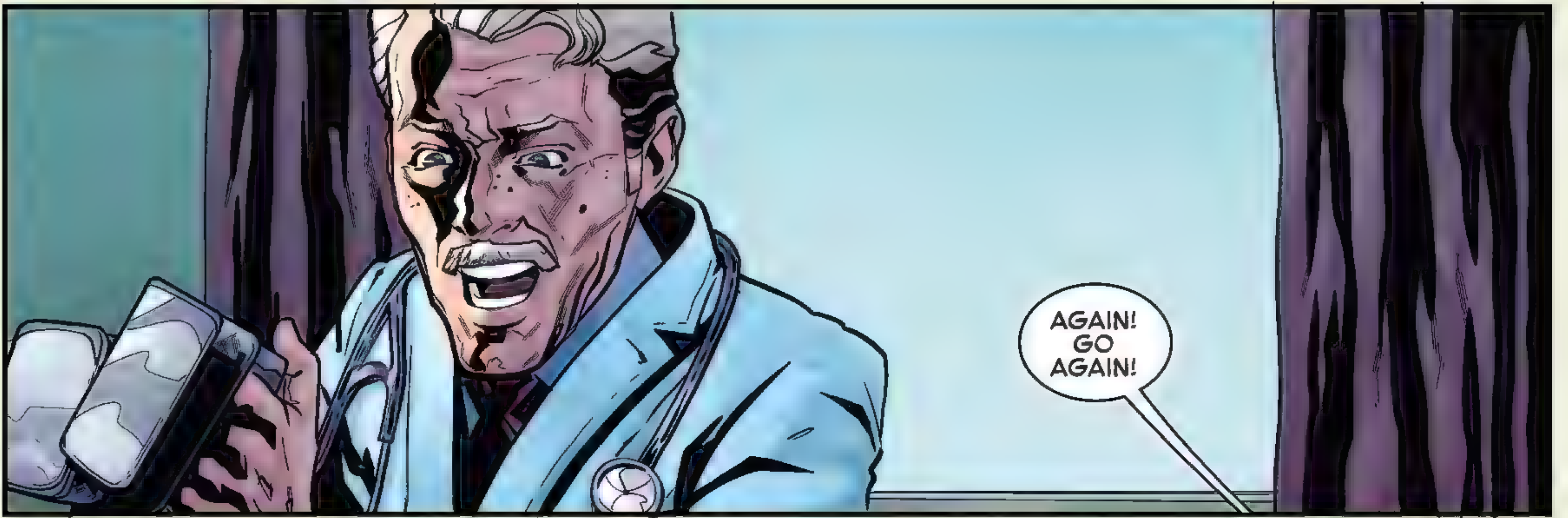
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

STAY HERE.

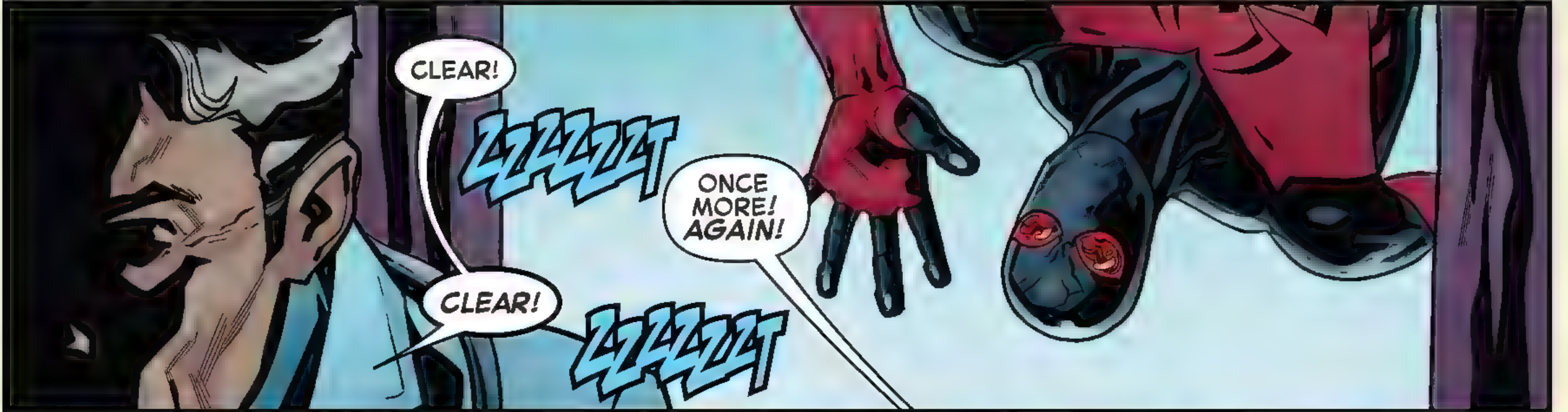


CAN'T. PLACES TO GO.





AGAIN!
GO
AGAIN!



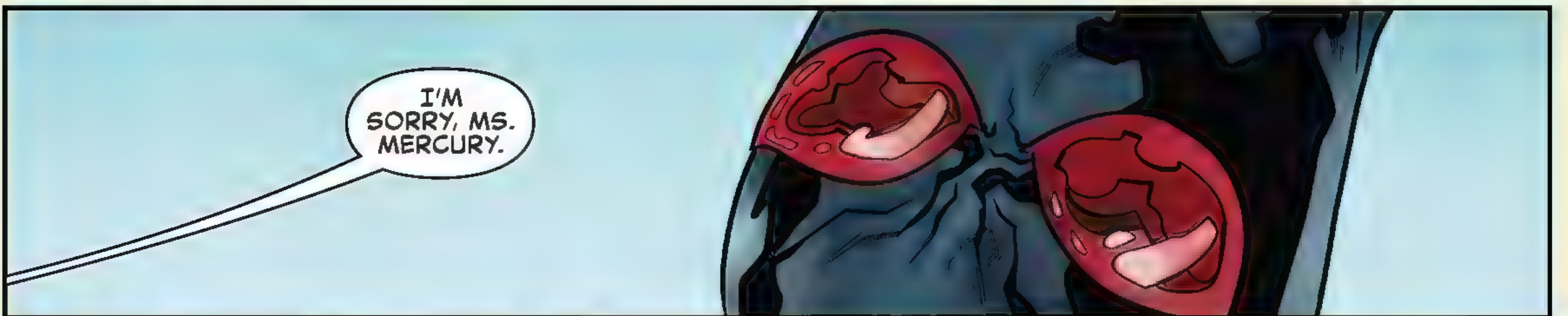
CLEAR!

ZZZZZT

ONCE
MORE!
AGAIN!

CLEAR!

ZZZZZT



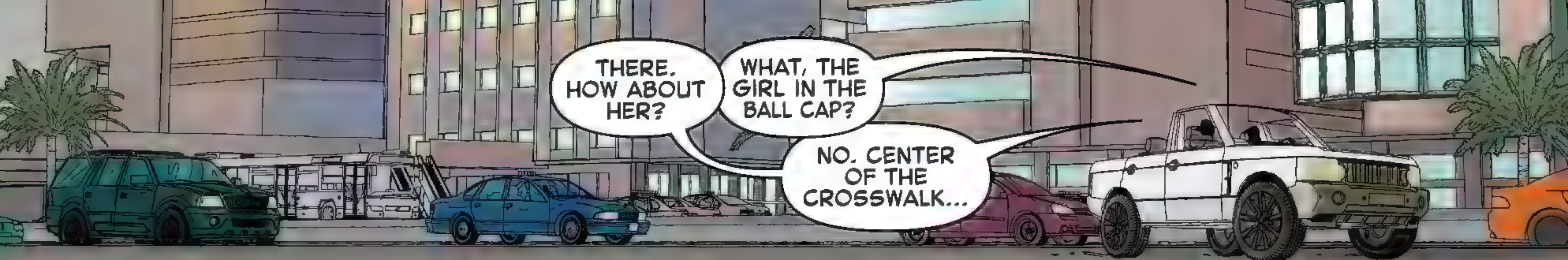
I'M
SORRY, MS.
MERCURY.



OH, GOD...
ABBY...OH,
GOD...



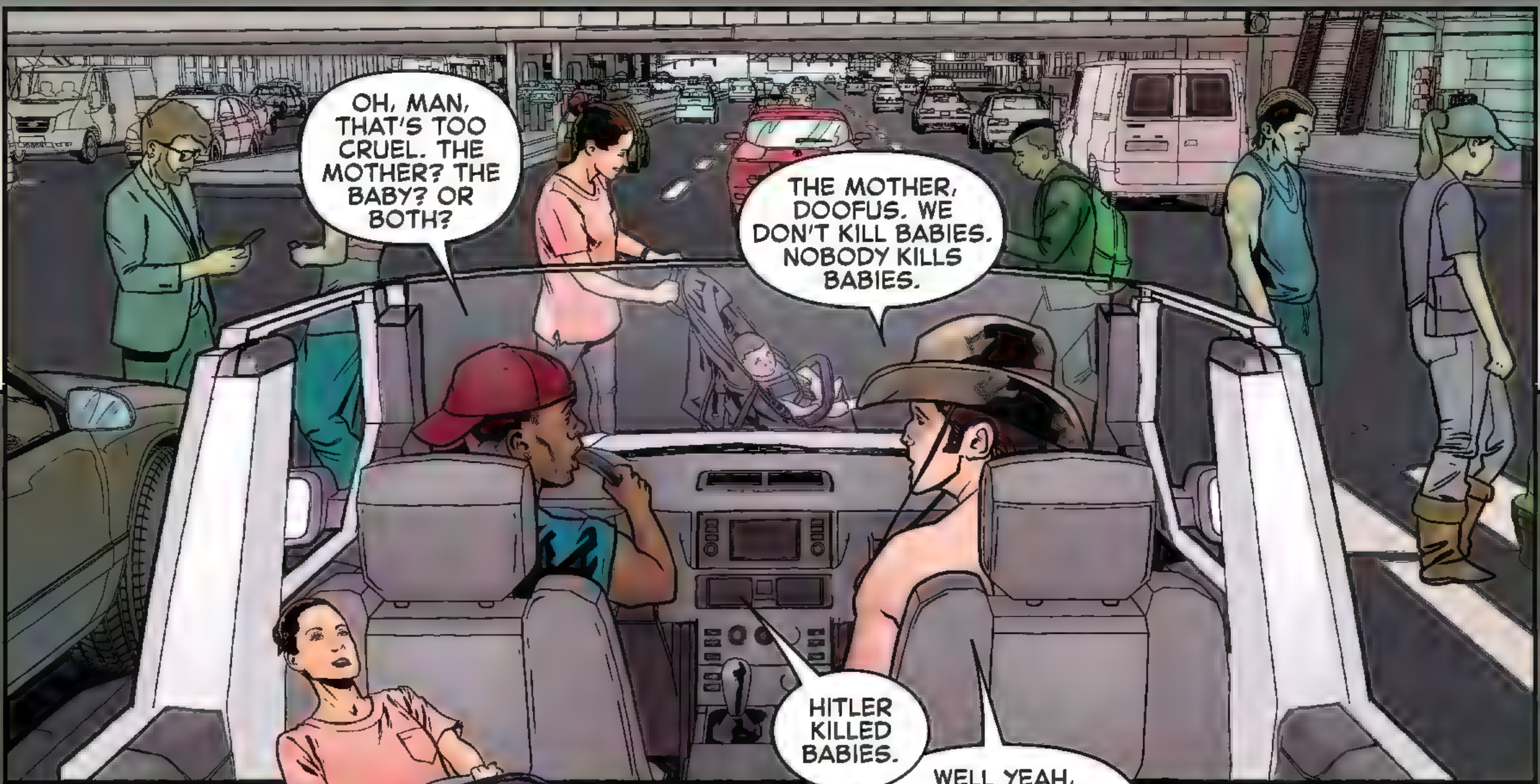
GOD...
WHY...?



THERE.
HOW ABOUT
HER?

WHAT, THE
GIRL IN THE
BALL CAP?

NO. CENTER
OF THE
CROSSWALK...

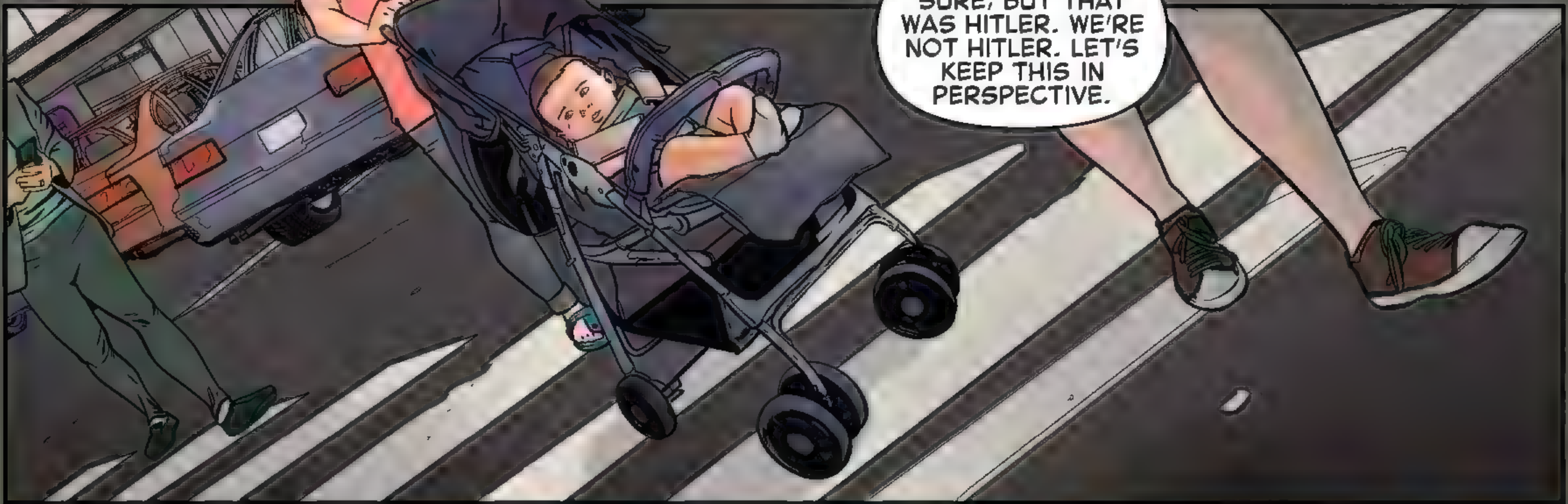


OH, MAN,
THAT'S TOO
CRUEL. THE
MOTHER? THE
BABY? OR
BOTH?

THE MOTHER,
DOOFUS. WE
DON'T KILL BABIES.
NOBODY KILLS
BABIES.

HITLER
KILLED
BABIES.

WELL YEAH,
SURE, BUT THAT
WAS HITLER. WE'RE
NOT HITLER. LET'S
KEEP THIS IN
PERSPECTIVE.



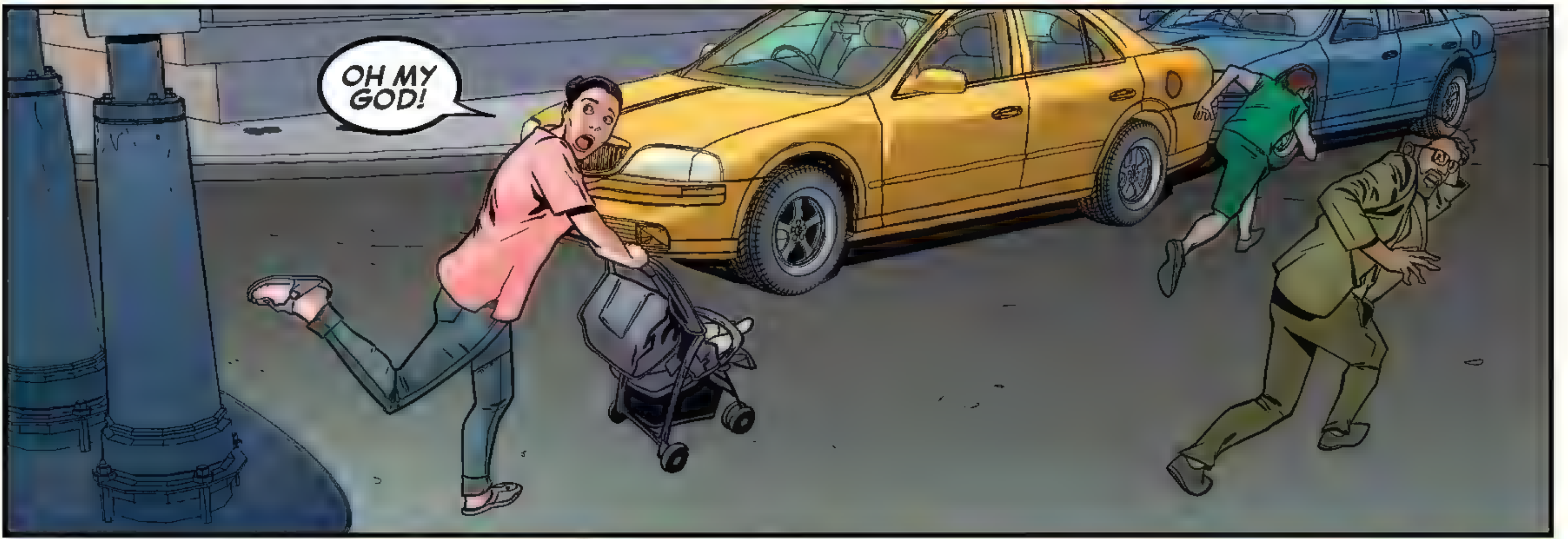
GUYS, THE LIGHT'S
GREEN. YOU PLANNING
ON MOVING ANYTIME
SOO--?



BLAAAM



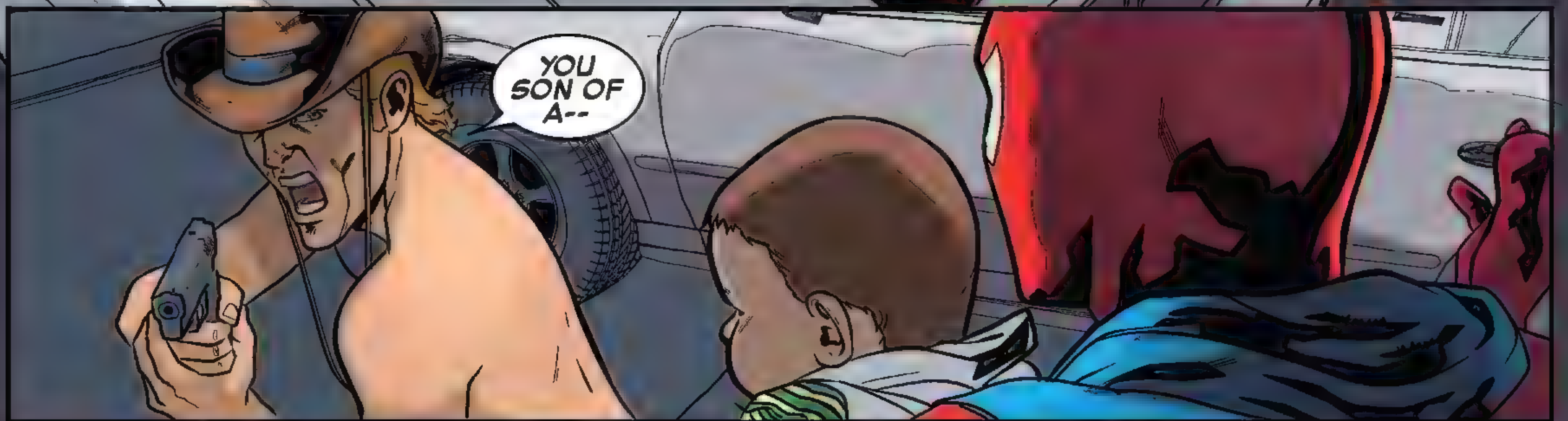
THANKS
FOR THE TIP,
OFFICER.





IT'S OKAY, MA'AM. YOU AND YOUR BABY ARE SAFE NOW.

CAN'T SAY THE SAME FOR THESE TWO MONSTERS, THOUGH.



YOU SON OF A--



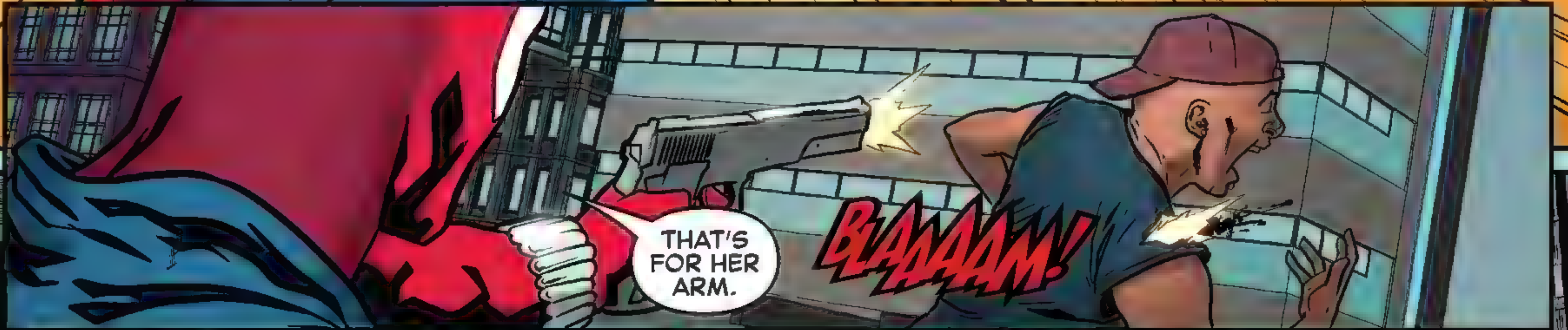
KRRUUNCH

Unhhh...

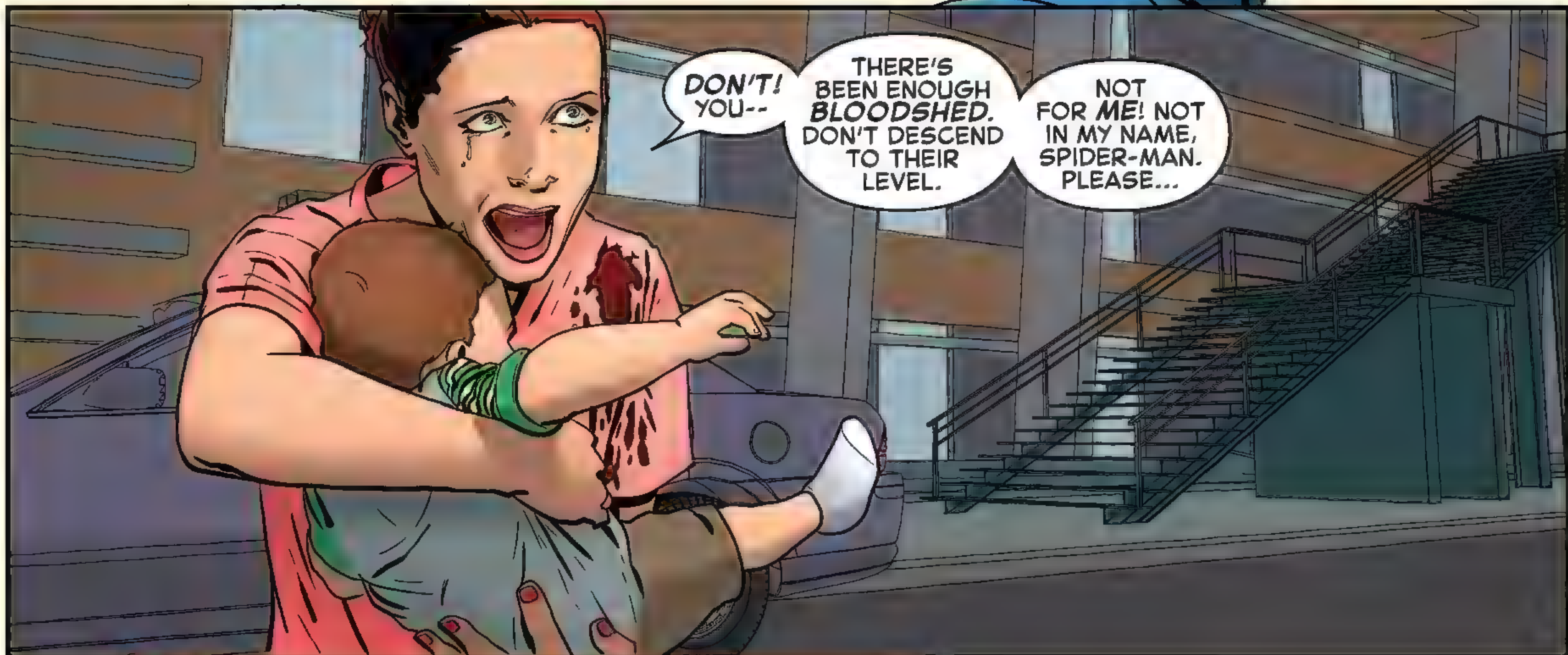


BLAAAM

ARRHHH!



NO!

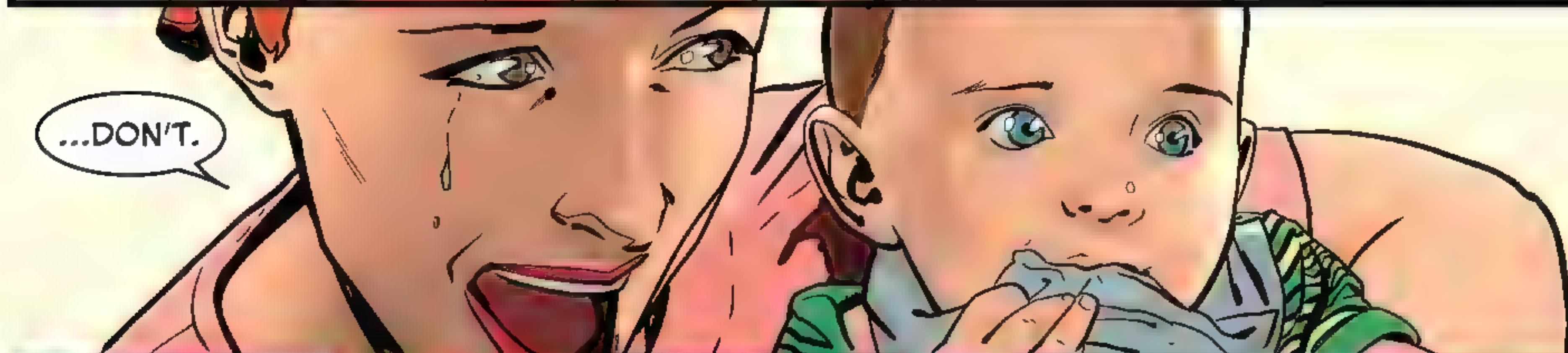


DON'T!
YOU--

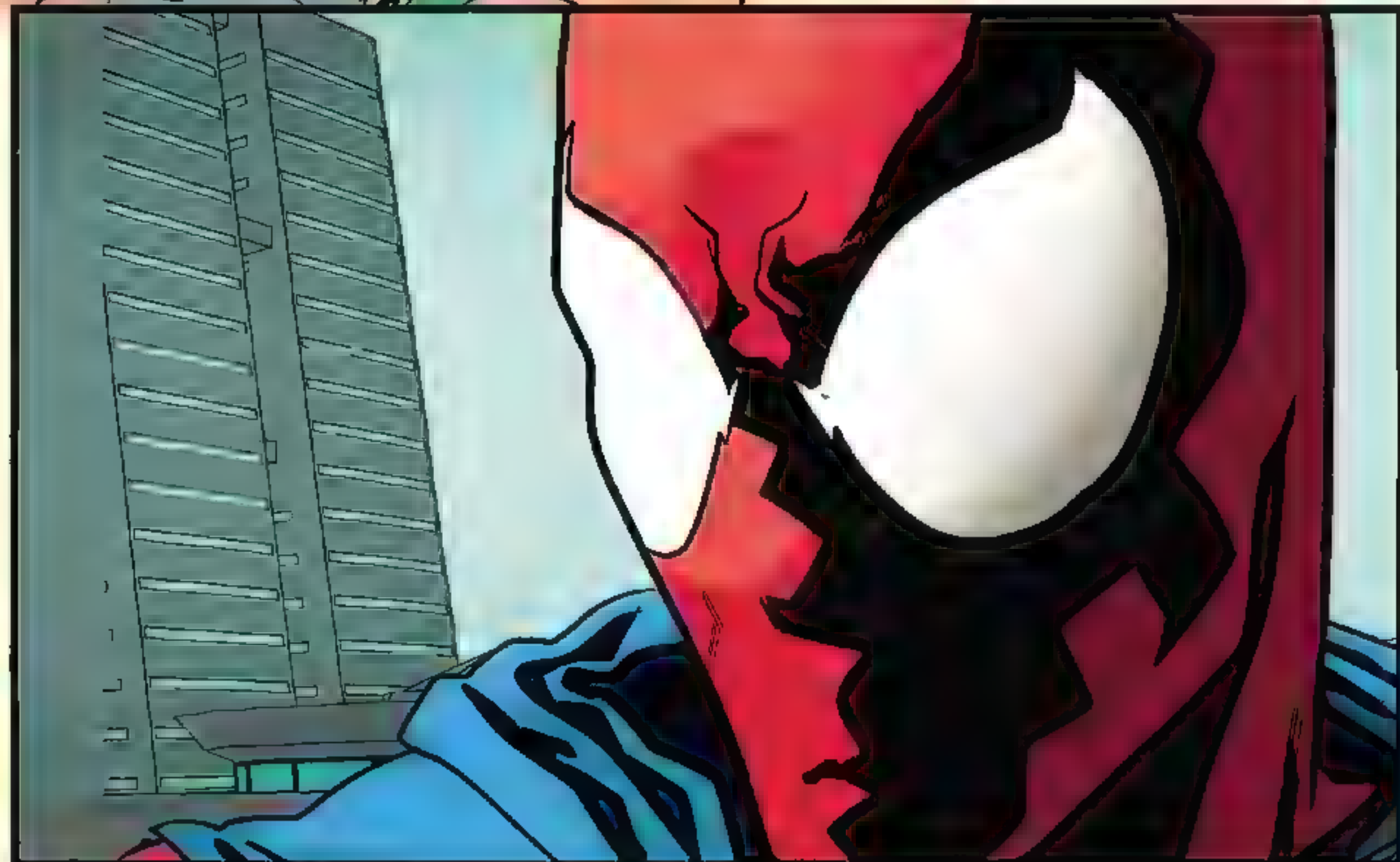
THERE'S
BEEN ENOUGH
BLOODSHED.
DON'T DESCEND
TO THEIR
LEVEL.

NOT
FOR ME! NOT
IN MY NAME,
SPIDER-MAN.
PLEASE...

...DON'T.



I'M NOT
SPIDER-
MAN.



WAAAAAM

DAMMIT.



IT'S NOT RIGHT. COUPLE OF NUTJOBS SHOOT UP A CITY AND GET, WHAT? WEBBED UP TO THE OUTSIDE OF THE LOCAL POLICE STATION? I COULD HAVE DONE MORE.

HAVEN'T FELT...ANGER LIKE THAT IN A LONG TIME. NEARLY KILLED THAT GUY. I WANTED TO KILL THAT GUY.

I'D LIKE TO SAY I WANTED TO PUNISH HIM FOR WHAT HE AND HIS SICK FRIEND DID TO THAT OLD MAN, TO THAT COP, TO THAT MOTHER AND CHILD. BUT THAT'S NOT THE TRUTH.

THE TRUTH IS THAT IT REMINDED ME OF WHAT HAPPENED TO UNCL--



WHY DIDN'T YOU KILL HIM?

YOU HAD A CHANCE TO STOP THOSE TWO KILLERS, AND YET YOU LET THEM LIVE.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? HOW'D YOU GET UP HERE?

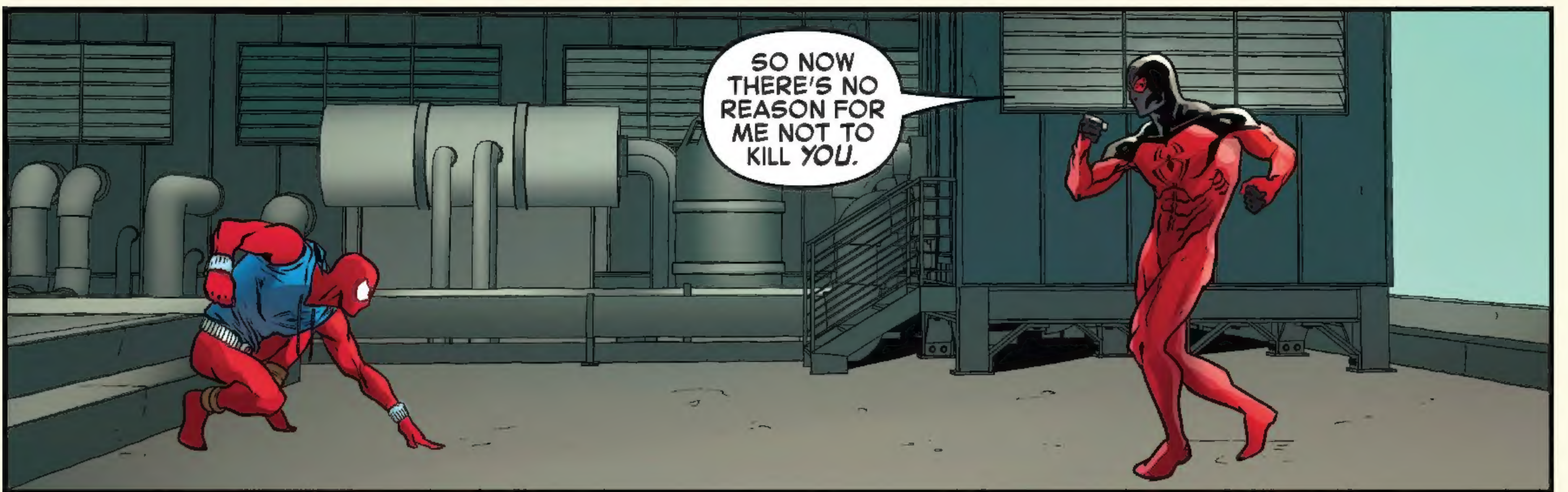
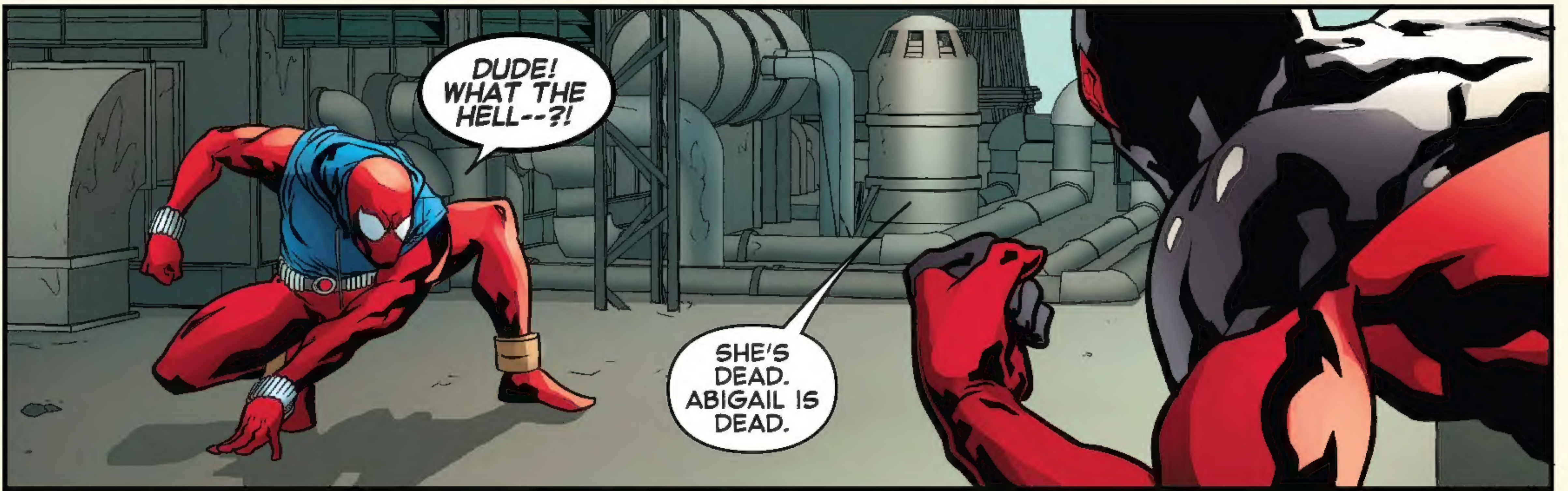
STAIRWAY. NOT THAT HARD.



I DON'T BUY IT. THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT YOU. YOU KEEP SHOWING UP. YOU--

WAAAW

OOOOFFF!





NEXT:



LET US KNOW HOW WE'RE DOING! DROP US A LINE AT SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM!
BE SURE TO MARK IT "OKAY TO PRINT"!

